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ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO CALIFORNIA PUBLIC JUNIOR COLLEGES WHO ARE IN ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

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AN APPRAISAL OF THE JUNIOR COLLEGE AS A "SECOND-CHANCE" INSTITUTION PRESENTS CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE OF SUCCESSFUL SALVAGING OF THE ABLE STUDENT. THE FAILURE OF THE STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY MAY BE DUE TO (1) EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY, (2) INABILITY TO ADJUST TO THE COMPLEXITY AND IMPERSONALITY OF THE LARGE CAMPUS, (3) LACK OF SOUND COUNSELING, OR (4) DEFICIENCY IN A BASIC SKILL SUCH AS READING. SINCE THE UNIVERSITY ADMITS ONLY SUPERIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES, THE JUNIOR COLLEGES RUN NO ACADEMIC RISK IN ACCEPTING THEM, ALTHOUGH THEY FOLLOW DIFFERENT POLICIES FOR SUCH ADMISSIONS. SOME ADMIT THE STUDENTS AUTOMATICALLY, BUT OTHERS DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THOSE ON PROBATION AND THOSE DISMISSED. SOME REQUIRE A 1-SEMESTER LAYOUT, AND OTHERS RESTRICT THE UNIT LOAD. IN ONE SURVEY, JUNIOR COLLEGE PRESIDENTS SUBMITTED INFORMATION ON NEARLY 300 SUCH STUDENTS WHO WERE CURRENTLY DOING WELL. FROM THIS IT APPEARS THAT THE JUNIOR COLLEGES ARE PERFORMING A VITAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AND IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT FURTHER INSTITUTIONAL STUDIES WILL BE CONDUCTED ON THE SECOND-CHANCE STUDENT. THE ADMISSION POLICIES OF THE JUNIOR COLLEGES FOR THIS PARTICULAR KIND OF STUDENT ARE COMPARED WITH THEIR POLICIES FOR TRANSFERS FROM OTHER JUNIOR COLLEGES AND FOR OTHER CLASSES OF STUDENTS. THIS ARTICLE IS A REPRINT FROM "COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY," VOLUME 41, NUMBER 2, WINTER 1966. (HH)

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Admission of Students to California Public Junior Colleges Who Are in Academic Difficulty at the University of California

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THE open-door college, by virtue of its interest in every student who seeks the opportunity to prove that he can successfully do collegiate work, is to a degree, also a "second chance" college. The dilemma of the open-door school, which in California must take practically all who apply, is thus compounded. Questions regarding length of stay and level of course difficulty are added to the original open-door issue: Who may attend? Is a change in educational objective justification enough to allow a second, even a third or fourth chance? How many levels of subcollegiate English, for example, can we afford to offer? Do we have trained personnel to handle an adult version of seventh grade mathematics?

Pertinent to the present study are the questions: Should students who are either on probation, subject to probation, or dismissed from the University of California be allowed to enroll in California public junior colleges? If they should, then should such applicants be treated differently or the same as other applicants? Should they be allowed to enroll immediately? Should their programs be restricted? Should they be on probation or special probation? How long should they be allowed to stay? What other special conditions should characterize the "contract" made with students who ask for admission to junior colleges after an unsuccessful University attempt?

This study, deals with one aspect of Remedial Education, a rapidly growing function of the junior college. That is the "salvage" and "repair" work which most California junior colleges accept in good faith: "salvaging" a potentially top performer who didn't make it the first time, "repairing" a defeatist attitude which frequently accompanies failure, and "redirecting" the individual whose tests and records suggest that he might prosper in a different curriculum. We are obviously not studying the "illiterates" and "untouchables" who apply for junior college entrance. It should be made clear that we are dealing,

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in general, with superior high school graduates who, for a variety of reasons, were not successful at the University.

IMPORTANCE OF THIS STUDY AND ITS PURPOSES

The present study is focused upon students who are in academic difficulty at the University of California, either on probation, subject to dismissal, or dismissed for academic reasons from a campus of the University. Increasing numbers of these students who cannot return or choose to leave the University while on probation are applying for admission to California junior colleges. As more exacting University standards are announced, it is safe to predict that such students will, in ever greater numbers, seek entrance to public junior colleges in the state. The primary objective of this study is to determine the extent to which California public junior colleges are prepared or are preparing to handle these individuals, to determine policies and procedures of each individual institution.

Certain problems peculiar to this group complicate solutions. One of these is directly related to the general academic potential of the group. Many very able students, residents of junior college districts to which they now hope to return, are found in this group. Should these applicants be given special consideration? Can we (asks the junior college administrator) afford to make distinguishing policies?

A second objective of this study is, then, to determine if students in question are given special consideration at the point of admission.

For some time, officers of the University of California, particularly those responsible for admissions, placement, and relations with schools, have likewise been concerned about students who for a variety of reasons have not been successful in initial work taken at the University. It is widely recognized by University officials, moreover, that many of these individuals finally achieve some measure of academic success, or possibly a new start in a new field of endeavor, in junior colleges of this state.

The University, however, recognizes its responsibility to provide some direction to its students who unfortunately find themselves in academic difficulty of a serious if not terminal nature. Little specific information is, at present, available to guide University counselors and others who have responsibility for helping such students find a new institution. This study, it is hoped, will provide such information. We are told, for example, that merely a listing of appropriate

policies and procedures of California public junior colleges would be of strategic value to University personnel. We are confident, in addition, that such material, once compiled, interpreted and exchanged will be of more than passing interest to our junior college colleagues.

Several presidents suggested at the outset of this study that a sampling of student success be included in the final report. It is interesting to note that nearly 300 names of students were submitted who are currently making good on their second opportunity for a collegiate education provided by California junior colleges, convincing evidence that the state's two-year colleges are indeed performing a vital community service.

A third objective of this study is to present specific evidence that students who deserve a second chance are succeeding in California junior colleges.

While much has been written on the transfer function, the honored responsibility of the community-junior college, little is available on its remedial-salvage mission. Least information exists on second-chance students. This report it is hoped, will encourage junior colleges to conduct institutional studies in this area of growing concern.

The balance of this report is devoted to a description and interpretation of data generously submitted by seventy California public junior colleges, who not only forwarded information requested, but verified statements to be placed in final form on the attached charts. The writer is particularly indebted to Mrs. Katherine Walker and Dr. Vern Robinson of the Los Angeles Relations with Schools Office for their help in designing the final inquiry.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Considerable differences are readily observable in policies and procedures for admitting students to California public junior colleges who are in academic difficulty at the University of California. While some institutions will automatically admit these students, particularly those on University probation, but not dismissed, junior colleges report a wide variety of policies and procedures to govern such admissions.

1. All but four junior colleges (from a total of 71 institutions)) list a policy governing the admission of each of the three categories of students in academic trouble at the University. One of the three, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, reports "No

policy" on those on University probation or those who have been dismissed; those subject to dismissal (category 2) are acceptable for one semester of trade-training only. All institutions reporting such a policy will admit students, invariably on probation, who are not succeeding in University work. No junior college indicated direct aversion to the admission of these students.

2. Probationary policies and other admission hurdles may be more severe for the dismissed University applicants than for those on University probation. These differences include the imposition of a one-semester layout, more stringent unit load restriction, and individual action. Twenty-six institutions, however, give the same policy for each of the three categories, and a like number report the same policy for two of the three listed categories.
3. Thirteen report unit load restrictions in one or more of the student classifications. These vary from 6 to 15½ units.
4. A one-semester layout is required by 15 institutions of students in at least one of the established categories.
5. Wide variation is also found in minimum probation and retention standards. Although these data were not specifically requested, a number of junior college administrators furnished such standards. Except for those institutions which waive all restrictions, these standards are college-wide.

Minimum Standards for:			
Academic Probation		*Retention*	
GPA	*Colleges*	*GPA*	*Colleges*
1.5	15	1.5	9
1.6	2	1.6	1
1.75	3	1.75	2
1.8	1	2.0	19
2.0	8	2.3	1

This account is incomplete, however, and does not represent an accurate view of California public junior college policies. A 1963-64 study of probationary practices in California public junior colleges conducted by Gerald D. Cresci, Consultant, Bureau of Junior College Education, California State Department of Education, shows that, while the California Administrative Code, Title 5, Section 131 (e) states that a student who has failed to achieve a 1.5 GPA in attempted units shall be placed on probation. In reality about two-thirds of Cali-

fornia public junior colleges require a higher than 1.5 to remain in good standing.

Colleges	*Per Cent**	*GPA or Less for Probation*
2	2.7	1.49 or less
26	36.0	1.50
4	5.5	1.60
9	12.0	1.75
25	35.0	2.0
1	1.3	2 times total units minus 10 or less
4	5.5	2 times total units minus 6 or less

* Does not equal 100, due to rounding.

Mr. Cresci's study also indicates that:

1. Almost all junior colleges place non-high school entrants on probation.
2. Some junior colleges place on probation upon entrance all high school graduates whose high school GPA is below that required for good standing by the institution.
3. Most junior colleges admit only on probation transfer students from other institutions whose GPA's are below the local standard, although students might not have been on probation at their former schools.[1]

Mr. Cresci's final point has special reference to inter-junior college transfers, and is further suggestive of an impression gained from data being collected for the present study: a number of California junior colleges tend to be more lenient with the university student in academic difficulty than a student in similar trouble at another junior college. A Cerritos College regulation illustrates: Students dismissed from state colleges or universities may enroll without petitioning; students dismissed from other junior colleges must stay out one semester before petitioning for admission. Our Santa Ana College respondent offers justification of this procedure:

> Students disqualified from another junior college are not acceptable. University entrance requirements lead us to believe that disqualified students could be good risks. Students disqualified from the University are therefore accepted.

[1] Correspondence with Carl G. Winter, Consultant, Bureau of Junior College Education, California State Department of Education.

Eleven junior college administrators responding to the present study indicate that students under consideration are treated the same as any other applicant, while 19 list some type of special consideration for former University students. Elimination of need for petitioning is a frequent consideration; a second is the waiver of the one-semester layout rule.

Some statements of special consideration, however, are more sweeping. From Diablo Valley College comes the statement: "If a student transfers from the University of California with either 'Probation' or 'Dismissal' stamped on his transcript, he is automatically eligible for entrance." (Such students are placed on probation at Diablo Valley.) The logic of this liberal attitude is referred to in statements from several other colleges. These cite several points of view:

1. We have had extremely favorable experience with these students. Reasons for difficulty at the University are probably other than lack of ability. Change in major to a two-year curriculum frequently results. (Foothill College)
2. We tend to give such students a positive break when we can on the theory they have already had a traumatic jolt. Basis for judgment is the following: ability—probably affirmative, realistic objective, readiness. (Los Angeles Harbor College)
3. The tendency has been to accept students of good promise who have failed to adjust readily to the competition of the more selective and complex institution. (San Jose City College)

The attitude of these institutions is summarized by our Ventura College respondent:

> Students who go directly to the University from high school are, we feel, usually capable of doing successful work. In nearly every case these students have done well at Ventura College and have later continued their education successfully in a four-year college.

Seventeen junior colleges list special requirements which students in academic difficulty at the University must meet. Ordinarily included are an interview with an appropriate college official or committee and assignment to a particular counselor. Los Angeles Valley College's group orientation (40 to 50 students) is mandatory. Chabot College requires a letter from all individuals which should explain what applicants did during the period of required nonattendance,

how the problem that caused disqualification has been met, and why now a return to college is required. At Chaffey College, such students, when admitted, sign an agreement that they recognize conditions of admission. Glendale College realistically informs dismissed University students that grade points earned during dismissal status are not used to cancel University of California grade point average deficiencies.

It is not difficult to document the achievement of California junior colleges to provide second opportunities to students who are unsuccessful in their initial University efforts—the third objective of this study. Those who are successful in junior colleges are usually eager to talk.

STUDENT ANECDOTAL RECORDS

A recent graduate of Hartnell College, Salinas, California, is typical of many who "find themselves" in a small college atmosphere, responding to personal interest taken in them by counselors and instructors:

> Entered the University with a good record in a small high school; shy and retiring; did poorly in physics and chemistry; after a year of mediocre success, entered Hartnell College on Dean's permission; changed major to Economics; won Wall Street Journal award as best Economics student of the year; lettered in basketball; graduated from Hartnell and ultimately from Cal Poly with a degree in Business Administration.

A small college atmosphere is not necessarily related to size. Students interviewed at Los Angeles City College (one of the country's largest junior colleges) commented:

> The counseling Center is always open; instructors in my department (Nursing) are available 24 hours a day; practically everybody crosses the quad between classes.

Emotional immaturity rather than intellectual inability is often a major factor in the failure of University lower classmen. A Foothill College student, an Electrical Engineering major, reported that he felt lost at the University. He made little attempt to develop consistent study habits. Contacts with other Foothill students who had experienced similar difficulties were, he claimed, largely responsible for a revival of his "educational drive." The story of a girl who found suc-

cess at Taft College illustrates dramatically how, through personal attention, a junior college can help a student regain self-confidence.

> Joan ranked seventeenth in her high school class of 192; scored in the top centile on both the Cooperative English Test and School, College Abilities Test; did poorly at the University as an Art major; felt overwhelmed; allowed to enter Taft College on personal recognition of the Dean of Students; returned to the University after one semester at Taft and subsequenly graduated as an Art major; currently taking calculus at one of the campuses of Peralta Junior College District hoping to qualify for the School of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley, a second baccalaureate degree.

A weakness in basic skills, primarily reading habits, frequently leads to failure. A Foothill College student, down 10 grade points after three semesters at the University, attributed her lack of success to slow and inefficient reading. As a poor reader, she invariably "froze up" on examinations, and soon began to doubt her ability to succeed. She entered a special intensive summer class in reading improvement at Foothill. After one semester of regular work, she is a B + student at Foothill College and has regained to a considerable extent interest in continuing her collegiate education.

Again it should be emphasized that students interviewed for this study were not "poor risks" from high school. They, and many others not cited, were "University eligibles" who for a variety of reasons failed in initial attempts at post high school education. Without the "academic salvage" services of California's junior colleges, these high potential students would probably have been permanently disillusioned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. One of the few studies of a classification of students central to this investigation has just been completed at El Camino College. "An Analysis of the Records of Students Entering El Camino College on Probation from other Institutions of Higher Learning," conducted by Jan Undem and Steven J. Muck (Mr. Muck was an administrative intern in the UCLA Junior College Leadership Program), recommends that institutions initiate studies in this area, particularly follow-up studies of students receiving or having received second opportunities to do successful collegiate work. This recommendation should be

heeded by California junior colleges, which are destined to face increasing numbers of potentially superior students wanting a second chance.

2. Feedback from former students is one of the most effective methods of evaluating programs. Counseling staffs of many California junior colleges regularly interview transfer students currently attending the University. Of particular interest are frank comments regarding preparation for University work, counseling service, and actual courses previously taken and those in which the student is currently enrolled. A transfer questionnaire is utilized by most junior colleges. Some (see 1. above) prepare follow-up studies based upon interview findings. Los Angeles City College, for example, shares its report, "Counseling Center Research Study," with the University's office of Relations with Schools. This institution and many others, along with the University, highly recommend this practice.

3. Although no junior college expressed reticence toward the idea of providing second-chance opportunities, a few statements suggested that admitting "University cast-offs" might lessen the institution's academic standing. Being just as tough as the University, we would submit, is an unwise goal. To become a junior university may, for a few, be all too convenient. When this happens the junior college "forfeits its identity and its opportunity to experiment in the development of a program most appropriate to it."[1]

4. In the years ahead, schools and colleges of the University of California, as well as junior colleges of the State, must realistically face the problem of the "second chance" student. Specifically, campuses of the University should, in spite of pressures to the contrary, continue to permit readmission under the current "Dean's Approval" procedure.

5. The University student, it must be said, should from the earliest moment in his career be given individualized attention. "He should never become a cog in the academic machinery but should enjoy to his individual capacity the intellectual, social, spiritual resources of a great university."[2] Programs developed in recent semesters under the leadership of the UCLA Dean of Students, including a three-day in-

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[1] Leland L. Medsker, *The Junior College: Progress and Prospect.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960, p. 53.

[2] "From the UCLA Chancellor's Desk." University of California, Los Angeles. Volume 5, No. 1. January, 1963. p. 3.

residence orientation for freshmen, and a reading clinic for poor and slow readers, exemplify the University's resurgence of interest in student welfare and success. These steps and others which would create personal experiences for the individual should be strengthened and extended.

It is in this area, personal educational opportunity, that the University can learn most from the community-junior college. It is here that the comprehensive public two-year college makes its greatest contribution. Because of its responsibilities for lower division preparation or occupational training, it has learned to be tough-minded; but through its close community bonds and secondary school background, it has an inherent capacity for tenderheartedness. All educational institutions, particularly the University, need to practice the art of caring.

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